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ABSTRACT

The advantages and disadvantages of changing class lengths at Montclair State College to a standardized 75-minute period were studied by a faculty senate task force. The task force assessment involved: a faculty survey of the proposal for changing class periods; consideration of comments submitted by faculty, staff, and others; an open discussion at the college; a student survey; evaluation of type of class schedules used by other New Jersey state colleges; and a review of the literature. Of the 37 percent of the faculty responding to the survey, about three-quarters did not want to have a 75-minute class period. Seventy-one percent of these faculty respondents had previously taught a 75-minute class. Reasons for not wanting the standardized 75-minute class included difficulty maintaining attention, and the need for a variety of class periods to meet various teaching needs. Seventy percent of the faculty preferred the college's present combination of variable class times, while 25 percent preferred to have all 50-minute classes. Of the 315 students responding to a survey, 56 percent were against and 40 percent were for the proposal. Additional findings of the surveys, discussions, and evaluation of other colleges are discussed. The questionnaires are appended. (SW)

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REPORT

of the

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE TASK FORCE

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September 24, 1984

IHE 018 057

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE TASK FORCE

REPORT

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MONTCLAIR STATE COLLEGE
Faculty Senate
Administrative Affairs Council

REPORT

of the

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE TASK FORCE

Task Force Members

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Augustin, Monica (Ms.)	Office of the Registrar
Bretherton, George (Dr.)	History
Cyrus, Stephen (Dr.)	Busin Educ / Office Syst Admin
Davidson, Michael S. (Dr.)(Chair)	Health Professions
Gorman, Patrick (Mr.)	Student Government Association
McCreath, Mr. William (Prof.)	Fine Arts

September, 1984

INTRODUCTION

During Fall, 1983, Marshall Butler the Registrar, recommended to President Dickson that the College standardize its class periods to 75 minutes instead of the variable segments presently being utilized. Dr. Dickson circulated the Registrar's proposal to Deans, Directors and Faculty for review.

The Faculty Senate, through its Administrative Affairs Council, constituted the Seventy-Five Minute Task Force to study the proposal. This Task Force originally consisted of six members, one from each of the five schools of the college, and a representative from the Registrar's office. Later, student representation from the Student Government Association was added.

According to the Registrar's memo of 9/28/83,

> "Historically Montclair State College has used a 50-minute three-day-a-week course scheduling pattern. More recently, academic and departmental needs have brought about significant changes in the types and varieties of patterns of course scheduling. This variety has caused serious problems in the room and course scheduling as well as leading to student enrollment overlaps, examination overlaps and the underutilization of our very limited facilities. Discussions with faculty also reveal almost universally that a 50-minute period is too short".
>
> "We have taken seriously the many concerns of the numerous constituencies affected and have determined after study that a 75-minute class schedule might better meet the needs and desires of the College community."

The purpose of the Seventy-Minute Task Force was to determine if the faculty, students and other interested members of the Montclair State College community agree that a standardized 75-minute class schedule is likely to "better meet the needs and desires of the College Community." In order to achieve its purpose, the Task Force:

1. Conducted a faculty survey to get a full range of opinions about the 75-Minute proposal.
2. Considered the comments sent by the faculty, staff and other interested parties to members of the Senate and the 75-Minute Task Force itself.
3. Held an open discussion for the college on "The Merits of Changing All Daytime Class Periods to 75 Minutes."
4. Obtained some student input.
5. Determined the type of class schedules used by other New Jersey state colleges.
6. Reviewed the literature to determine if there had been any empirical studies that compared the academic and/or administrative merits of the 50-minute and 75-minute class periods.

This Report reviews the results of each part of the Task Force's activities, states its conclusions and makes its recommendations.

Part I

FINDINGS OF THE TASK FORCE

FACULTY SURVEY

The major method that the Task Force used to determine its conclusions and make its recommendations was the Faculty Survey. This nine question instrument (Appendix 1) was sent to all full-time faculty members via campus mail in May, 1984.

Results

Table 1 shows that 185 or 37 per cent of the faculty responded to the survey. One hundred-twenty were male, 63 were female. Two faculty did not respond to this question. Table 2 indicates that 85% of the respondents were tenured. Table 3 shows that over seventy-five percent of the faculty who responded to the questionnaire had been at the college for more than seven years. Individuals who had been at the college for 18 years or more made up the largest single group of respondents (28%).

Table 1
Gender of Faculty Respondents

Sex	Number	(%)
Male	120	(65%)
Female	63	(34%)
No-response	2	(1%)
Total	185	(100%)

Table 2
Tenure Status of Faculty Respondents

Status	Number	(%)
Tenured	158	(85.5%)
Non-tenured	26	(14%)
No-response	1	(.5%)
Total	185	(100%)

Table 3
Years of Employment at Montclair State

Years	Number	(%)
0-3	25	(13.5%)
4-7	16	(8.5%)
8-12	45	(24.5%)
13-17	45	(24.5%)
18-more	51	(28%)
No Resp	3	(1.5)
Total	185	(100%)

Table 4 provides a listing of departments in the college, the number of respondents from each department and the percentage of each department that answered the questionnaire. All departments were represented in the results of the survey. The range of departmental participation was 8-100 percent. Twenty-one (60%) of 35 departments had response rates above the total faculty response rate of 37 percent.

Table 4

Departmental Responses

Department	No. Responding	% of Dept. responding
Acct-Law	7	54%
Anthropology	5	63%
Biology	2	14%
Bus-Ed/OSA	6	67%
Chemistry	6	55%
Classics	2	100%
Communic Sci	6	46%
Counselling	2	20%
Curric-Teach	1	13%
Economics	3	27%
Educ Found	3	50%
Educ Leader	3	21%
English	5	14%
Environ Stud	3	43%
Finance	3	30%
Fine Arts	6	21%
French	4	44%
German/Russian	2	33%
Health Prof	6	60%
History	8	40%
Home Economics	7	41%
Indust Studies	3	27%
Linguistics	2	67%
Management	4	33%
Marketing	5	56%
Math/Comp Sci	15	50%
Music	11	24%
Phil-Religion	1	10%
Physicl Educ	7	44%
Physics	1	8%
Political Sci	4	44%
Psychology	16	48%
Sociology	7	50%
Spanish/Ital	6	38%
Speech	9	41%
No Resp	4	
Total	185	

The key question in the faculty survey was, "Should Montclair State College standardize its daytime class meetings to a 75-minute period which meets twice during the week?." Table 5 shows that 141 or 76% of the faculty responded that they did not want to have a 75 minute standardized class period.

Table 5
Response to 75-minute Class Question

Response	Number (%)
Yes	32 (17%)
No	141 (76%)
No Opinion	9 (5%)
No response	4 (2%)
	185 (100%)

It is of significant importance that of the total group of 185 who responded to this survey, 71 percent (132) had previously taught the 75-minute class period. Of the group of 141 who responded "No" to the question about whether they would choose the 75-minute class, 70% (98) had previously taught the 75 minute class. Of the group of 31 who responded "Yes" to the question, 77% (24) had previously taught the 75 minute class.

Table 6 provides the responses to the question, "If you do not agree that MSC should go to a 75 minute class period, please circle which of the following alternatives you would prefer?" This table shows that 70% (98) who said "No" to the 75-minute question preferred the present combination of variable class times while 25% (35) would prefer to have all 50 minute classes.

Table 6
Alternative Choices to 75-minute Period

Alternative	Number (%) making this choice
a. Combination of 50, 75 150 minute and other periods.	98 (69%)
b. All 50 minute classes	35 (25%)
c. 50 minutes-AM 75 minutes-PM	8 (6%)
d. 75 minutes-AM 50 minutes-PM	0 (0%)
Total	141 (100%)

Table 7 shows the responses to the question "One of the significant concerns about the 75-minute class period is its impact on faculty schedules. Is this a matter of concern for you?" The largest percentage (45%) indicated that they were concerned about the impact on their schedules while 36% said they were not concerned. It may be of some importance that 19% either had no response or some response other than that requested.

Table 7
Responses to Question on Inpact on Faculty Schedules

Response	Number	(%)
Yes	84	(45%)
No	66	(36%)
Other	10	(5%)
No response	25	(14%)
Total	185	(100%)

Tables 8 and 8a list representative responses to the open ended question "Why have you answered as you did?" These are divided into comments from those who said they did not want the standardized 75-minute period and those who answered they did want that arrangement.

While it is difficult to quantify these responses, it is clear that the major concerns for those who do not want the standardized 75-minute period center around attention span, the need for a variety of class periods to meet various teaching needs and concern for not having sufficient time to establish rapport with students.

For that very small number who did favor the 75-minute period, it was also clear they had concern for not being able to utilize media effectively in a 50-minute span and for not having sufficient discussion time in a 50-minute segment.

Table 8

Reasons For Negative Responses To The 75-minute Period

1. "Student attention to lectures diminishes after 45 minutes."
2. "Flexible hours are needed for the variety of types of courses I teach. Lectures better in 50 min. Discussion/lab courses better in 75 or 150."
3. "Scientific studies on listening have shown big fall-out rates after 20-30 minutes."
4. "I strongly feel that an instructor can cover more material over a semester in 50 minute periods."
5. "The Modern Language Association has done research that indicates that after 50 minutes students' performance drops off sharply due to fatique and frustration at the beginning level of foreign language study."
6. "Student absence or class cancellation is less detrimental

if it is only 1/3 rather than 1/2 of week's work."

7. Re: statistics "two sessions per week do not permit enough cycling of presentation-practice-feedback to student."

8. "I consider it essential to meet students at least three times a week so as to establish better personal rapport."

9. "I believe the class scheduling issue is related to the mechanics of scheduling and not based on evidence of educational practice."

10. "The smaller the no. of class contacts, the poorer the learning."

11. "I like 75 minute classes! But I respect other people's desires and wish to continue maximum flexibility."

12. "Class times should have flexibility for students and faculty."

13. "Different classes lend themselves to different time periods."

Table 8a
Reasons For Positive Responses To The 75-minute Question

1. "More in-depth work is done in 75-min blocks."

2. "75 minutes provides opportunity for teaching innovations, group process and lecture and follow up on daily lessons."

3. "50 minutes is not enough time to show and discuss medical presentations."

4. "The current 50 minute class is obviously too brief a span to launch a lecture or discussion in appreciable depth."

5. "I find-75 minute periods gives time to deliberate on issues, present complex material and develop student-faculty rapport."

In summary, the faculty of Montclair State College clearly rejected the proposal that the College standardize its class periods to 75 minutes. The members who responded had significant total experience at Montclair State on which to base their decision. In addition, most of them also had specific experience teaching the 75-minute class periods. All departments were represented in the results of the survey and this gives additional credence that the survey results indeed represent the opinion of the entire faculty.

COMMENTS FROM FACULTY

A series of unsolicited comments were sent to members of the Senate and to the Task Force by various individuals and faculty groups before the Faculty Survey took place.

For example, the Faculty Council of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences held a "Referendum on the 75 minute class period." Eighty-nine of 165 faculty responded. Seventy voted to keep the status quo of mostly 50-minute classes, 7 voted in favor of the 75-minute schedule and 12 voted for other configurations.

In addition, the French and Spanish/Italian departments voted unanimously against the 75-minute proposal. Several other individual faculty members expressed opposition. There were few who expressed any agreement.

In general, practically all unsolicited comments showed opposition, some with vehemence, to the 75-minute class period proposal. The reasons were quite variable. A number of chairpersons cited expected difficulties with class scheduling, a comment that seems to conflict with the Registrar's view that scheduling would be simpler with a universal 75-minute period. Concerns about attention span was particularly evident with a number of individuals citing studies that had been conducted showing college age students could not maintain interest in classes as long as 75 minutes. Others voiced concern about instructor fatigue, less flexibility in course scheduling, what to do for four-credit courses and for labs. One individual, who seemed to have studied the Registrar's faculty scheduling formats concluded that practically no one would get a three day schedule.

Perhaps all the unsolicited comments can best be summarized by one faculty member's view that,

> "the administrative simplicity of the proposed program in no way justifies its disasterous effects on the academic program of the college."

OPEN DISCUSSION

An Open Discussion on "The Merits of Changing All Daytime Class Periods to 75 Minutes" was held on March 22, 1984 at 4:00 pm. Flyers for this meeting were distributed to all faculty and staff. In addition, copies of the announcement were placed at various locations on campus and the Montclarion and SGA were notified.

Attendance at this meeting was quite modest. Only about 20-25 individuals attended and this included members of the Task Force.

Brief reports were given by several members of the committee. In addition Marshall Butler, Registrar gave an overview of the proposal and cited the various advantages and disadvantages of the 75-minute class schedule. He was subjected to a very vigorous inquiry about the proposal. He discussed a wide range of advantages and disadvantages. It was quite clear that the Registrar had suggested the 75-minute model with only the best interests of the College in mind. It was also apparent that he was faced with some very difficult administrative problems that could be solved by instituting the 75-minute standardized schedule.

The "Open Discussion," while poorly attended, gave its audience full opportunity to express its views and question the Registrar intensively about his proposal. For those who attended, it seemed to serve as an excellent preliminary to the faculty survey.

STUDENT SURVEY

When the Task Force invited the Student Government Association to provide student representation, it was expected that student input would be provided through that group. Although a student was appointed by the SGA to be a member of the Task Force, input through that representative did not occur.

Therefore, the Task Force decided to do a student survey similar to that done with the faculty. A nine question instrument (Appendix 2) was distributed to entire classes during the last two weeks of the Spring/1984 semester.

Each teaching member of the Task Force (one from each School) gave the questionnaires to one of his classes. In addition, each member was asked to find another individual from their school to distribute the surveys to one of their classes. Although there was no expectation of achieving a truly random sample, this type of distribution did provide student input from each school in the College.

In reading the responses, it appeared that some students answered "Yes" when they meant "No" and vice versa. For example, some said "Yes" to the question about whether they approved of the 75-minute period but in their reasons for answering as they did, they would explain why they thought the 50-minute period was better.

Results

Three-hundred-fifteen students took part in this survey, 112 of which were male (36%), 196 were female (62%) and 7 (2%) did not

respond (Table 8). Three-hundred-one of the 315 were full-time students (Table 9). Freshman, sophomores, juniors and seniors were about equally represented. (Table 10).

Table 8
Gender of Student Respondents

Sex	Number	(%)
Male	112	(36%)
Female	196	(62%)
No-response	7	(2%)
Total	315	(100%)

Table 9
Full-time/Part-time Status

Status	Number	(Percentage)
Full-time	301	(95.5%)
Part-time	12	(4 %)
Other	2	(.5%)
Total	315	(100 %)

Table 10
Year at Montclair State College

Status	Number	(Percentage)
Freshman	69	(22%)
Sophomore	77	(24%)
Junior	83	(26%)
Senior	78	(25%)
Other	2	(1%)
No Response	6	(2%)
Total	315	(100%)

The major question in this survey was, "Should Montclair State College standardize its daytime class meetings to a 75-minute period which meets twice during the week?"

Table 11 shows that 56% of the students said "NO" and 40% said "YES." This points out that a clear majority of the students in this sample said they did not want to have a standardized 75-minute class period. Table 12 shows, in addition, that males (59%) were substantially more opposed to the 75-minute schedule than females (52%).

Table 11

Response to 75-minute question.

Response	Number	(%)
Yes	125	(40%)
No	175	(56%)
No Opinion	10	(3%)
No response	5	(1%)
Total	315	(100%)

Table 12
Responses to 75-minute Question by Sex

Sex	Yes	No	No Opin
Males	40 (36%)	66 (59%	6 (5%)
Females	81 (41%)	101 (52%)	14 (7%)
No Resp	3	2	
Blanks (2)			

Table 13 lists the thirty-two departments represented in the student survey responses. It also includes a breakdown by department of the "Yes" and "No" answers to the 75-minute question. Twelve departments had less than 5 students responding. With the exception of Accounting-Law, Biology, Communication Science, Economics, French, Home Economics and Psychology, students from all other departments were against the 75-minute class period proposal or ambivalent to it (50%-For, 50%-Against).

Table 13
Student Responses to 75-minute Question by Department

Department	No. Resp.	Yes	No	No Opin/Resp
None	48	10	36	2
Acct/Law	12	9	2	0
Anthropology	0	0	0	0
Biology	18	10	8	0
BEOSA	40	18	20	2
Chemistry	0	0	0	0
Classics	0	0	0	0
Communic Scien	8	4	3	1
Economics	10	6	4	0
English	16	3	11	2
Environ Stud	2	1	1	0
Finance	4	2	2	0
Fine Arts	13	3	9	1
French	5	3	2	0
Gen-Hum	2	1	1	0
Geoscience	5	2	2	1
German/Russian	0	0	0	0
Health Prof	5	0	5	0
History	7	0	6	1
Home Economics	10	6	2	2
Industrial Stu	3	2	1	0
Lingustics	1	1	0	0
Management	7	2	4	1
Marketing	14	5	9	0
Math/Comp Sci	23	11	12	0
Media	2	1	1	0
Music	2	1	1	0
Philosophy/Rel	2	0	2	0
Physical Educ	13	6	6	1
Physics	5	1	4	0
Political Sci	10	3	7	0
Psychology	14	8	5	1
Sociology	6	3	3	0
Spanish	4	1	3	0
Speech	2	1	1	0
Other	2			
Totals	315	125	175	15

Table 14 gives the replies to the question, "If you do not agree that MSC should go to a 75 minute class period, please circle which of the following alternatives you would prefer?" Although only 175 individuals should have answered this question, in fact, 187 student did. Sixty percent of these favor a combination of 50, 75, and 150 minute periods while 27 percent like all 50-minute classes. Only 3 percent checked the Upper Division-75-- Lower Division-50 minute model while 5% checked the 50-minute AM/75-minute PM model. No one was in favor of the 75-minute AM/50-minute PM suggestion.

Table 14
Alternative Choices to 75-minute Classes

Alternative	Number (%)
a. Combination of 50, 75 150 minute and other periods.	113 (60%)
b. All 50 minute classes	50 (27%)
c. Upper Div.-75 minutes Lower Div.-50 minutes	6 (3 %)
d. 50 minutes-AM 75 minutes-PM	9 (5 %)
e. 75 minutes-AM 50 minutes-PM	
f. Other	9 (5 %)
Total	187 (100%)

Table 15 provides a summary of responses to the question "One of the significant concerns about the 75-minute class period is its impact on student schedules. Is this a matter of concern for you?" Only 32 percent of the students said this was a concern for them while the same amount (32%) indicated this was of no concern. In addition, a similar percentage answered something other than a clear-cut "Yes" or "No" to this question.

Table 15
Impact on Student Schedules

Response	Number	(%)
Yes	102	(32.5%)
No	101	(32.0%)
Other	108	(34.0%)
Blank	4	(1.5%)
Total	315	(100%

Table 16 provides the responses to the question "Do you work during the school year?" This table indicates that 80 per cent (251) of students responding said they worked during the school year.

It should be added that of the 251 individuals who responded "Yes" to whether or not they worked during the school year, a majority, 54% (134) were not in favor of making all classes 75 minutes.

Table 16
Responses to Question About Whether Student Works During School Year

Response	Number	(%)
Yes	251	(80 %)
No	62	(19.5%)
No Response	2	(.5%)
Total	315	(100 %)

Tables 17 and 17a are representative responses to the question, "Why have you answered as you did?" The individuals who said "No" to the 75-minute period question seemed to be most concerned about being able to maintain their attention span for 75 minutes. In addition, there was considerabe concern about losing the flexibility that the present variable class-time options provide. Most importantly, many of them believe that they learn less in two seventy-five minute classes than they do in three 50-minute classes. There was also some concern that instructors would release students before the 75-minute period was over.

The reasons of those who preferred the 50-minute class period felt that scheduling would be easier, commuting would be less, and that 75 minutes was required for some classes.

Table 17
Reasons for Negative Responses To The 75-minute Period

1. "It is very hard to keep your attention span for 75 minutes."
2. "75-minute classes will adversely affect schedule and time spent on campus"
3. "It will be difficult to impossible to sit through a class that long especially if it was a boring class."
4. "Some classes, such as math clases would be too taxing in a 75-minute period."
5. "75 is too long to have class. I had many classes of this length in the college I attended before Montclair and I like the 50 minute better."
6. "I feel that if we went to longer classes, I would learn less".
7. "I've been in 75-minute classes and find it difficult to keep attuned to the teacher."
8. "I'm use to it this way."
9. "I feel professors would release students before time."

10. "It is easier to schedule classes conveniently if there is a variety of class lengths and meeting times."

11. "All 75 minute classes would make it difficult if you missed one class."

12. "75 minute classes are too long. I can't keep my attention on a professor after 50 minutes. So I'm usually wasting the last 25 minutes.

13. "With the classes listed as 50, 75, 150 minutes, it allows for a more flexible schedule to be created. It also aids in getting the student out by 3:00 pm which enables a steady night working schedule to be created."

14. "More teachers would be available at more times with a combination of 50, 75, 150, and other periods."

15. "Because the parking situation is so bad."

16. "Scheduling flexibility-offering several class options provides the student with a better chance of choosing courses that fit in the time schedule he needs."

17. "75 minutes is too long to sit through a language class."

18. "From my experiences throughout 4 years of college, I believe that 50 minutes of a lecture class is sufficient. Only an interesting and enthusiastic professor could make a 75 minute class bearable for the students."

19. "I have taken the 75-min classes and I feel that less work is accomplished this way."

Table 17a
Reasons For Positive Responses To The 75-Minute Period

1. "I feel you can 'get into" a subject more with longer meeting times. Often, I have just gotten the feeling for a concept, and by then its time to go."

2. "We don't have to come here as often."

3. "Since I commute, it would cut down on travelling time."

4. "Can organize time on campus easier."

5. "Professors often have to shorten a lecture due to time constraints. After a lecture, little time is left for discussion or debate. Classes would be more meaningful."

6. "Less likely to cut a class if it only meets 2 times a week."

7. "There will be less overlap because all classes will be the same-75 min 2 days a week."

8. "Less class meetings-resulting in more time to do homework and assignments."

9. "Some classes require more than 50 minutes depending on the subject."

10. "Much easier for commuters to have 75 minute classes."

11. "75 minutes is more appropriate to cover the material."

12. "I have attended a school that had 75 minute classes and it was much easier to schedule 4-day weeks so I could work more hours. Also, there were not as many scheduling problems."

13. "I have had classes that meet 50 minutes, 3 times a week and I think it is a waste of time driving all the way here for 50 minutes. A class finally gets settled and the teacher finally get rolling and all of a sudden it's time to leave."

14. "It would be easier to arrange my work hours."

15. "The attention span is about in that area."

16. "Allows more full "no-class" days."

17. "Avoids waste of organizational time (attendance)."

18. "I feel I'll retain more information being in class longer."

19. "Should be standardized for easier scheduling."

20. "I transferred from William Paterson were (sic) they had 75 minute classes twice a week. Schedules were just as easier (sic) (maybe easier)"

21. "I had 75 minute classes in Accounting and found that I learned more 2X a week than with three 50 minute classes."

In summary, although this was not a random sample, all five schools of the College and most individual departments were represented in the results of the survey. The majority of the students in general were against the 75-minute proposal with students who worked being substantially opposed. Most students who did not want the 75-minute standard were in favor of the present combination of 50, 75, and 150 minutes classes.

CLASS LENGTHS AT OTHER STATE COLLEGES

The Committee, in order to have some basis of comparison, queried the other state colleges to find out what types of schedules they used. Kean, Glassboro, Paterson, Stockton and Trenton are presently using the 75-minute schedule. Jersey City has a variable schedule and Ramapo, which recently was on a 75-minute period, returned to the 50-minute model.

Paterson is of particular interest since it recently reported the results of an inquiry into whether or not to keep the 75-minute period which they had utilized for some years. Both faculty and students alike voted overwhelmingly to keep the 75-minute class period as the daytime standard. The William Paterson Beacon, a student newspaper, reported on Nov. 1, 1983 that 87% of 245 faculty members favored the 75-minute class period and 92% of 1042 daytime students favored the 75-minute class.

Some of the advantages of the 75-minute period listed by Paterson included adequate time to properly develop subject matter and grade papers between papers between sessions, less cutting because of the two sessions per week, parking is less of a problem with two weekly class meetings, commuting time is less and 50-minute class periods might interfere with work.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Seventy-Minute Task Force attempted a computer-based review of the literature. Unfortunately, this approach did not yield anything specific that compared the 50-minute and 75-minute class periods. Although this was disappointing, it was not unexpected. The William Paterson College "Report from the Academic Standards Committee on the Length of Class Period" stated that,

> "A systematic search of the education and educational psychology literature did not find a single citation relevant to the length of class time on student academic performance."

Part 2

CONCLUSIONS

The basic purpose of the Seventy-Minute Task Force was to determine if the 75-minute class period would, as the Registrar suggests, "better meet the needs and desires of the College Community" than the present combination of different class lengths.

The specific needs that the Registar refers to are contained in his statement that the variety of class pericds has caused

> "serious problems in the room and course scheduling as well as leading to student enrollment overlaps, examination overlaps and the underutilization of our very limited facilities".

Needs of the College Community

Room scheduling- There is no doubt that there is a significant problem in the scheduling of rooms. It is not unusual for faculty to have to go to three different rooms for the same class that meets three times per week. The 75-minute class period would clearly help reduce this problem. However, there was no significant mention of this concern in either the faculty or student surveys. It is an issue that needs to be addressed in greater detail but it is clear that one of the reasons for the classroom problem has been the substantial increased use of space for administrative reasons. As student enrollment declines, perhaps this problem will also decline.

Student schedule overlap- The Registrar has stated that one of the most important reasons for going to the standardized 75-minute

class period is to prevent students from having overlapping classes. The Registrar estimated that 250 students had this problem in Spring/1984.

While the Task Force agrees that having a standardized class period would eliminate this, it seems that the real issue lies with the difficulty of the Registar's office to catch these problems before a student is assigned to overlapping classes. The Task Force assumes that sometime in the future the College will have a computer based on-line registration system which will preclude this overlap from occurring.

Examination overlaps- Although the Task Force did not determine the extent of this problem, it would seem logical that if it is a substantial one, then the Registrar's office could review the method by which final exam periods are determined and change them to preclude examination overlap. If it means adding another day to the examination schedule, then perhaps this should be considered. On the other hand, if examination overlap occurs because of course overlap, then eliminating course overlap will also eliminate this problem.

Desire of the College Community

The results of the Faculty Survey and, to a lesser extent, the Student Survey, show that the 75-minute class schedule does not meet the desires of those two constituencies of Montclair State College.

The reasons that the faculty rejected the proposal are varied but center around the perceptions that the academic merits of the 75-minute period are not as substantial as those of a variable class schedule. There were many individuals and some departments, particular those in the sciences, English and in foreign languages,

that believe the attention span of students is too short to be maintained in 75-minute class segments. Other pertinent reasons for faculty rejecting the proposal include the reduction of time for establishing rapport with students, increased time away from class for an absence and concern that different classes lend themselves to different time periods.

In addition, a number of faculty, although they seem to be in a minority, have concern about the impact of the 75-minute class period on the number of times they must come to the campus. At present, the three day teaching schedule is the standard and some individuals are loath to give up that type of arrangement. Those who are concerned about this have a variety of reasons for their views but it is clear that faculty need sufficient time to be outside consultants, to do research, to participate in professional activities, to have time for student teaching and fieldwork observations and to be active members of their communities. All of these are required by the college at all levels of faculty evaluation. Consequently, a number of individuals beleive that the 75-minute class schedule might create four or five day schedules with the resultant consequences that time for these required activities would be delimited, thus hurting their evaluations.

The Task Force concludes that the standardized 75-minute class period would not be in the best interests of the College at this time. While it is quite clear that there are advantages to the 75-minute concept, there is wide faculty antipathy towards its implementation. Should the administration adopt such a measure, it would probably be met with major antagonism by selected members of the faculty.

The Task Force believes, however, that given the expected

difficulties in maintaining enrollments and the anticipated move towards more "marketing" of the college, the variable class period may be a decided advantage for the different age and working goups who might be interested in attending Montclair State College.

Part 3

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Seventy-Five Minute Task Force recommends that:

1. The Senate reject the proposal that Montclair State College adopt a standardized 75-minute class period.

2. The Registrar continue the variable class time approach but permit those who believe that their subject may be better taught in 75 minute segments to do so.

3. The College initiate a study to determine the true academic advantages of 50-minute, 75-minute and 150-minute class periods. Although there is some evidence to suggest that certain class lengths may be better than others for specific courses of study, it is recommended that each department attempt to determine, in an objective way, which class length period is best for their particular subjects.

MONTCLAIR STATE COLLEGE
FACULTY SENATE

To: All full-time faculty
From: Dr. Michael S. Davidson, Chair
Seventy-five Minute Task Force

Date: May 3, 1984

As many of you know, the Registrar has proposed that the College change all its daytime class periods to 75 minutes. In order to get a full range of opinions about this proposal, we would appreciate it if you would fill out this questionnaire and return it, by May 15, 1984, to:

Dr. Stephen Cyrus
BEOSA Department
Room 302
College Hall

Please circle, place an X or fill in as appropriate.

1. Are you tenured? Yes No

2. Years at MSC? _____

3. Department _____

4. Sex M F

5. What length(s) of class periods have you taught? (Circle more than one if appropriate)

   a. 50 minute
   b. 75 minute
   c. 150 minute
   d. 4 hr. studios, labs, etc.
   e. Other (Please specify)

6. Should Montclair State College standardize its daytime class meetings to a 75 minute period which meets twice during the week.

   Yes _____ No _____ No opinion _____

   If you do not agree that MSC should go to a 75 minute class period, please circle which of the following alternatives you would prefer.

   a. A combination of 50 minute, 75 minute, 150 minute and other periods.

   b. All 50 minute classes.

   c. Upper division (jr.-sr.)-75 minutes; Lower division (fr-soph)-50 minutes.

   d. 50 minute classes in the AM and 75 minute classes in the PM.

e. 75 minute classes in the AM and 50 minute classes in the PM.

f. Other - please specify below.

_____
_____
_____

7. Why have you answered as you did? Please be brief, number, and list your reasons.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8. One of the significant concerns about the 75 minute class period is its impact on faculty schedules. Is this a matter of concern for you? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. Additional Comments:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

MONTCLAIR STATE COLLEGE
FACULTY SENATE

Appendix 2

To: MSC Students
From: Dr. Michael S. Davidson, Chair
Seventy-five Minute Task Force

Date: May 7, 1984

As many of you know, the Register has proposed that the College change all its daytime class periods to 75 minutes. In order to get a full range of opinions about this proposal, we would appreciate it if you would fill out this questionnaire and return it to your instructor.

Please circle, place an X or fill in as appropriate.

1. Are you a full-time student as MSC? Yes No

2. Status at MSC? Fresh Soph Jr. Sr. Other (Please specify)

3. Major _____ If none, check here _____.

4. Sex M F

5. Do you work during the school year? Yes No
   If yes, do you work
   a. during week Number of hours _____
   b. evenings only Number of hours _____
   c. weekends only Number of hours _____

6. What length(s) of class periods have you attended? (Circle more than one if appropriate)
   a. 50 minute
   b. 75 minute
   c. 150 minute
   d. 4 hr. studios, labs, etc.
   e. Other (please specify)

7. Should Montclair State College standardize its daytime class meetings to a 75 minute period which meets twice during the week.

   Yes _____ No _____ No opinion

   If you do not agree that MSC should go to a 75 minute class period, please circle which of the following alternatives you would prefer.

   a. A combination of 50 minute, 75 minute, 150 minute and other periods.

   b. All 50 minute classes.

   c. Upper division (jr.-sr.)-75 minutes; Lower division (fr-soph)-50 minutes.

   d. 50 minute classes in the AM and 75 minute classes in the PM.

e. 75 minute classes in the AM and 50 minute classes in the PM.

f. Other - please specify below.

7. Why have you answered as you did? Please be brief, number and list your reasons.

8. One of the significant concerns about the 75 minute class period is its impact on student schedules. Is this a matter of concern for you? Why?

9. Additional Comments: